

1. A modular fluorescence sensor having the following general formula:

$$Fl$$
— $(CH_2)_n$ — N
 Sp
 N — $(CH_2)_x$ — An
 $|$
 $(CH_2)_y$ — Bd_2

wherein:

Fl is a fluorophore;

N is a nitrogen atom;

 B_{d1} and B_{d2} are independently selected binding groups, wherein the binding groups are capable of binding an analyte molecule to form a stable 1:1 complex;

Sp is an aliphatic spacer

An is an anchor group for attaching the sensor to a solid substrate; and n = 1 or 2, m = 1 or 2, and x is an integer.

- 2. The sensor of claim 1, wherein Fl is selected from the group consisting of naphtyl, anthryl, pyrenyl, phenanthryl, and perylenyl.
- 3. The sensor of claim 1, wherein R_{d1} is R_1 -B(OH)₂ and R_{d2} is R_2 -B(OH)₂, wherein R_1 and R_2 are aliphatic or aromatic functional groups selected independently from each other and B is a boron atom.
- 4. The sensor of claim 3, wherein R_1 and R_2 selected from the group consisting of: methyl, ethyl, propyl, butyl, phenyl, methoxy, ethoxy, butoxy, and phenoxy groups.
- 5. The sensor of claim 1, wherein Sp is a straight-chain alkane.
- 6. The sensor of claim 5, wherein the straight-chain alkane comprises from 1 to 9 carbon atoms.
- 7. The sensor of claim 6, wherein the straight-chain alkane comprises 6 carbon atoms.
- 8. The sensor of claim 1, wherein An comprises organic functionality.
- 9. The sensor of claim 8, wherein An comprises methyl.

- 10.\ The set \mathbb{R}^n claim 8, wherein An comprises phe
- 11. The sensor of claim 1, wherein An and x are selected to provide stable attachment of the sensor to a micrometer scale particle.
- 12. The sensor of claim 11, wherein the particles are suitable for use in flow cytometry.
- 13. The sensor of claim 1, wherein B_{d1} , B_{d2} , Sp, m, and y are chosen to provide selective binding of the sensor to glucose.
- 14. A modular fluorescence sensor having the following general formula:

FI N (CH₂)_x—An N
$$R_2$$
 R_2 R_3 R_4 HO OH

wherein:

Fl is a fluorophore;

N is a nitrogen atom and B is a boron atom;

 R_1 and R_2 are aliphatic or aromatic functional groups which allow covalent binding of an analyte to the hydroxyl groups forming a stable 1:1 complex, wherein R_1 and R_2 are selected independently from each other and;

An is an anchor group for attaching the sensor to a solid substrate; and x is an integer.

- 15. The sensor of claim 14, wherein Fl is selected from the group consisting of naphtyl, anthryl, pyrenyl, phenanthryl, and perylenyl.
- 16. The sensor of claim 14, wherein R_1 and R_2 are independently selected from the group consisting of: methyl, ethyl, propyl, butyl, phenyl, methoxy, ethoxy, butoxy, and phenoxy groups.
- 17. The sensor of claim 14, wherein An comprises organic functionality.
- 18. The sensor of claim 17, wherein An comprises methyl.
- 19. The sensor of claim 17, wherein An comprises phenyl.

20. The sensor of claim 14, wherein An and x a selected to provide stable attachment of the sensor to a micrometer scale particle.

21. A modular fluorescence sensor of the following formula:

- 22. A method of synthesizing a modular fluorescence sensor comprising the steps of:
 - (a) forming an asymmetric compound of the following general formula:

Fl—
$$(CH_2)_n$$
— N
Sp N — $(CH_2)_x$ —An
 \mid
H

wherein:

Fl is a fluorophore;

N is a nitrogen atom and H is a hydrogen atom;

Sp is an aliphatic spacer;

An is an anchor group for attaching the sensor to a solid substrate; and n = 1 or 2, and x is any integer; and

- (b) replacing hydrogen atoms with B_{d1} and B_{d2} groups, wherein B_{d1} and B_{d2} are independently selected binding groups capable of binding an analyte molecule to form a stable 1:1 complex.
- 23. The method of claim 22, wherein Fl is selected from the group consisting of naphtyl, anthryl, pyrenyl, phenanthryl, and perylenyl.

- 24. The method of claim 22, wherein B_{d1} is R_1 -B(OH)₂ and B_{d2} is R_2 -B(OH)₂, wherein R_1 and R_2 are aliphatic or aromatic functional groups selected independently from each other, and B is a boron atom.
- 25. The method of claim 24, wherein R₁ and R₂ selected from the group consisting of: methyl, ethyl, propyl, butyl, phenyl, methoxy, ethoxy, butoxy, and phenoxy groups.
- 26. The method of claim 24, wherein the step of replacing of hydrogen atoms comprises adding orthobromomethyl phenylboronic acid.
- 27. The method of claim 22, wherein Sp is a straight-chain alkane.
- 28. The method of claim 27, wherein the straight-chain alkane comprises 9 carbon atoms.
- 29. The method of claim 28, wherein the straight-chain alkane comprises 6 carbon atoms.
- 30. The method of claim 22, wherein An comprises an organic functionality.
- 31. The method of claim 22, wherein An comprises methyl.
- 32. The method of claim 22, wherein An comprises phenyl.
- 39. A method of labeling solid substrates, comprising:
 - (a) providing a solid substrate;

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- (b) providing the modular fluorescence sensor of claim 1, wherein An is capable of being attached to the solid substrate;
- (c) reacting the sensor with the solid substrate under a condition sufficient to attach the sensor to the substrate.
- 34. The method of claim 33, wherein the solid substrate is a micro particle.
- 35. The method of claim 34, wherein the diameter of the particle is from 0.1 to 20 micrometers.
- 36. The method of claim 34, wherein the particle is a porous particle, and wherein the sensor is bound to the inside of the pores of the particle.
- 37. The method of claim 34, wherein the particle is a hydrophobic insoluble particle, and wherein the sensor is coupled to the surface of the particle.

- 38. The method of claim 34, wherein the particle is made from a material selected from a group consisting of polystyrene latex, plasticized polyvinyl chloride, glass, a semipermeable membrane, and a bio-resorbable polymer.
- 39. The method of claim 38, wherein the bio-resorbable polymer is selected from a group consisting of polyglycolic acid (PGA), poly-DL-lactide-co-glycolide (PLGA), starch, and gelatin.